

FLOOR STATEMENT HONORING
OUR NATION'S WOUNDED SOLDIERS

HON. CONNIE MACK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. MACK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor over 20 brave men and women of our armed forces that were wounded in combat in Iraq and Afghanistan and enjoyed some rest and relaxation in Fort Myers last weekend.

The soldiers are currently recuperating at the Dwight D. Eisenhower Army Medical Center at Fort Gordon, Georgia, and came to Fort Myers for the weekend because one man, Cliff Naylor, wanted to show his appreciation for the sacrifices these soldiers have made.

Mr. Naylor was injured himself during the Vietnam War. During his recovery, he spent a restful weekend in Miami, thanks to the hospitality of local organizations in the area. Now, 30 years later, Mr. Naylor repaid the same favor to a group of Iraq and Afghanistan war soldiers in his hometown.

Thanks to the generosity and kindness of the people of Fort Myers, these heroes were able to enjoy some much-deserved rest as well as some of what Southwest Florida has to offer, including our sunny weather and beautiful beaches. Local businesses and veterans organizations, such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion, offered free meals, lodging, transportation, and activities for each soldier. The entire weekend would not have been possible without the support and generosity of these businesses and organizations, and in particular, Mr. John Ebling, the Director of Veterans Services for Lee County, who assisted with preparations for the event.

I was fortunate to have met these gracious soldiers during a special event that was held in their honor on Monday. I was struck by their perseverance, determination, and commitment to their fellow soldiers. Their strength and hope is an inspiration to us all, and I hope they were able to feel the love and appreciation of our grateful community.

The 24 soldiers that Fort Myers honored with its generosity are: SFC Edgar Abrams, SSG Bernard Behrens, SSG Gregory Burton, SPC Amos Casillas-Hernandez, SPC Denver Dalton, SPC Crystal Davis, SSG Kevin Elliott, 1SG Joseph Gardocki, SPC Ephraim Giron, SGT Matthew Goodwin, SGT Joseph Gose, SPC Nash Marlow, SSG Paul Mullis, CPT Simon Obeng, SPC Andres Perez, SSG Hugh Pettigrew, SGT Tommy Richardson, SFC Corey Robinson, CPL David Rodrigue, SGT Scott VanNatta, SPC Marcus Varnell, SSG Carl Watson, SGT Safari Williams, and SSG Calvin Wilson.

Madam Speaker, I join all the people of Southwest Florida in thanking these courageous men and women for their service to our Nation. They've given so much in defense of our freedoms, and we all owe them a debt of gratitude for their personal sacrifices.

TRIBUTE TO ALLISON AND JERRY
SOKOL

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to Allison and Jerry Sokol for their devotion and dedication to the south Florida Jewish community, Hadassah, and Israel. They are being honored by the Galim Chapter of Hadassah at their First Annual Benefit Dinner on Thursday, October 11, 2007.

Mr. Jerry Sokol has been extremely active in numerous charitable and community endeavors for many years. Mr. Sokol co-founded the Future Generation Division of the International Israel Bonds Organization and has been bestowed volunteer leadership positions in the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, the Israel Bonds Organization, the Alexander Muss High School in Israel (AMHSI) program, the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, and the Miami Beach Jewish Community Center. Mr. Sokol is currently spearheading the efforts to raise the funds to build a brand new state of the art facility for the Miami Beach Jewish Community.

In addition to his work for the Jewish Community, Mr. Sokol contributes substantial time to a number of community causes. He is currently a Member of the City of Miami Beach Parks and Recreation Board and dedicates a considerable amount of time to coaching youth football and basketball. Professionally, Mr. Sokol is a Partner with the International law firm of McDermott, Will & Emery and is currently a Board Certified Healthcare Lawyer as well as a licensed CPA.

Mrs. Allison Sokol has been very active in a number of Jewish organizations most of her adult life. Mrs. Sokol's charitable involvement began right out of college, where she co-founded the Future Generation Division of Israel Bonds which spread nation wide. She was also part of the inception of Survivor Alone, an organization dedicated to helping Holocaust Survivors who currently live below poverty level. Mrs. Sokol currently contributes and volunteers with the Miami Beach Jewish Community Center, the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, the Beth David Gordon Day School Board, as well as the Miami Beach Fine Arts Board.

Over the past several years, Mrs. Sokol has been a member of Ort America, Mount Sinai's Young President's Board, the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee and the New World Symphony. Mrs. Sokol is also a Lifetime member of Hadassah and a founding member of the South Miami chapter of Hadassah.

After being a partner in two very successful business ventures, Manamana, a successful children's clothing manufacturer and Magic Box, one of the largest network integration companies in the Southeastern United States, Allison and Jerry Sokol started a family and are the proud parents of four children: Jake, Sophie, Caroline and Isaac.

It is a privilege to rise in honor of their tremendous philanthropic efforts and commitment to our community that has made such a positive impact on the 17th Congressional District.

HONORING 63RD ANNIVERSARY OF
ANNUAL FLORESVILLE PEANUT
FESTIVAL

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the 63rd anniversary of the Annual Floresville Peanut Festival, which celebrates the farming and harvesting of the peanut crop in Wilson County.

The Floresville Peanut Festival was first established on July 29, 1938, and has been held on the second full weekend in October every year since its inception. It is a grand celebration that recognizes the importance of the peanut as a crop staple to the South Texas agricultural community. The festival is started with the annual Goober Games on Tuesday afternoon, which is held on the grounds of the court house in Floresville, followed by the coronation of the Queen Tunaep and the Royal Court during the carnival on Thursday. Each member of the Royal Court receives a scholarship from the Floresville Peanut Festival Association.

On Friday, the full festivities begin for the weekend with rides, food booths, and the Kiddie Parade, in which the children of the City of Floresville are given the chance to show off their floats and costumes. Saturday marks the Grand Peanut Festival Parade, and the day's activities also include the annual raffle, arts and crafts vendors, dance groups, and other forms of entertainment that take place in the town square. The Floresville Peanut Festival has drawn in thousands of visitors from all over the great State of Texas, and other states, to celebrate the peanut as one of the most important crops in South Texas.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize the 63rd anniversary of the Annual Floresville Peanut Festival, and I thank you for this time.

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
TODD O'MALLEY FOR HIS TEN-
URE AS PRESIDENT OF WORK-
ERS INJURY LAW & ADVOCACY
GROUP

HON. ZACHARY T. SPACE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Mr. SPACE. Madam Speaker:

Whereas, Mr. O'Malley has shown an extraordinary commitment to his community by serving millions of workers across the United States in need of legal assistance through the Workers Injury Law and Advocacy Group (WILG) where he has been president; and

Whereas, Mr. O'Malley has demonstrated values of hard work and service throughout his life, always maintaining a positive outlook; and

Whereas, Mr. O'Malley has served as the Chairman of the Workers' Compensation Section of the Association of Trial Lawyers of America; and

Whereas, Mr. O'Malley serves on the Board of Directors of the Executive Committee for Pennsylvania Trial Lawyers and is a counsel member of the Workers' Compensation section of the Pennsylvania Bar Association; and